

Last week, President Barack Obama visited Virginia to talk about forced budget cuts that have now begun to take effect since March 1. In my view, the President did not need to travel 180 miles to know this simple fact: These forced budget cuts, known as “sequestration,” will irreparably harm our nation’s security and its all-volunteer force, and in turn will affect so many individuals and families in Virginia. While I was pleased that the president acknowledged the many challenges facing Virginia, I was disappointed not to hear more specifics for how he thinks this immediate challenge should be addressed. These cuts could have drastic implications for our region, not to mention risking the readiness of our armed forces and the functionality of our federal government. Our region is full of citizens whose roles are vital to the defense of this nation and the vital functions of government; Virginia will undoubtedly feel the effects of sequestration far more than most states. Implementing massive, arbitrary cuts, instead of specific, targeted reductions in wasteful spending, simply risks leaving our nation with a hollow military force and a disabled government. In addition, a ripple effect on Virginia will drastically effect the economy, with job losses in Virginia alone estimated to reach over 200,000.

Since sequestration was set in motion with the failure of the so-called Super Committee in November 2011, I have sounded the alarm about the importance of averting these cuts. My efforts have continued in recent weeks, and I will continue to fight for commonsense spending cuts, instead of these uneven, short-sighted reductions. I’ve been fighting sequestration implementation: I have voted four times for solutions to both cut government and ensure the federal government, and especially the Department of Defense, has what it needs to do their job and keep our nation safe. I have also cosponsored legislation to avert sequestration for one year through delayed implementation of Obamacare. I am concerned that many of my colleagues have not had the same sense of urgency that I’ve had over the past eighteen months to prevent sequestration and continue to reach out to educate them on the catastrophic effects of these cuts. On February 15, I joined a bipartisan group of Virginia senators and representatives in sending a letter to the president and congressional leadership, expressing our unified desire for a solution to sequestration. On February 25, I joined with the Navy League in Virginia Beach, along with my fellow Virginia Representatives Randy Forbes and Scott Rigell, to discuss the need for responsible replacements for these cuts.

On March 1, while most Members of Congress had left Washington, I joined with other members of the House Armed Services Committee [to discuss the catastrophic impacts of the sequester on our military](#). As our nation’s leaders continue to toss blame back and forth, our Commonwealth already knows the detrimental effects of the sequester. Federal government workers have been notified of possible furloughs, threatening their livelihood and ability to support themselves and their families. Four American aircraft carriers sit idle at Naval Station Norfolk, capturing the stark reality of the readiness crisis that did not wait until March 1. Work for shipyard workers has been delayed and many men and women in uniform have been asked to stay home just days before they were set

to deploy, injecting a great deal of stress on servicemembers and their families. It is so important that citizens in Virginia make their voice heard on this issue, and I was humbled to speak with many of you who have reached out to me on how sequestration will affect you, or your families. Please continue to share your stories on this critical issue.

If you haven't already, please take the time to take the [quick survey on my website](#) , sharing with me your thoughts on sequestration. You can also visit my website to read more on [my work to fight for a commonsense solution to this issue](#)

. The main streets of Virginia's First District are full of ideas to get our economy back on track, and your feedback is so important to me as I serve you. I can be reached by telephone at (202) 225-4261, through my website (

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